



Information for Participating OST Programs

Literacy = the ability to read and write one's own name and further for knowledge and interest, write coherently, and think critically about the written word (Wikipedia).

5 Key Literacy Skill Areas and Examples of Support Strategies¹:

1. *Phonemic Awareness*

Identifying and working with individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words.

Saying rhymes, identifying the onset and rhyme in spoken words and syllables, hearing and isolating individual sounds in words, connecting words that sound alike and words that sound different, blending and segmenting words, making new words by deleting or substituting phonemes (individual sounds), and attending to sounds of words in stories, songs, poems, and rhymes.

2. *Phonics*

Understanding the relationships between written letters and spoken sounds and teaching that there are systematic and predictable relationships between written letters and spoken words. The alphabet is considered to be a basic tool of the reader and writer.

Exercises with individual words sorted by sounds and letters, creating personalized alphabet books, writing letters on a variety of surfaces, and working with magnetic letters. Individual or group work on white, dry-erase boards is useful here, too.

3. *Fluency*

Ability to read text quickly and accurately. Instruction usually focuses on site words that help the student to recognize high frequency words to increase fluency. Fluent oral reading sounds effortless and expressive.

Practicing reading high frequency words, reading familiar books to help develop fluency, phrasing, and rapid word recognition, teacher modeling fluent reading and the use of intonation in read-alouds, and providing opportunities every day for independent, self-guided reading.

4. *Vocabulary*

The words we must know to communicate effectively, and applies to speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Vocabulary knowledge is an important predictor of reading comprehension ability.

Learning the meanings of parts of words, such as "un" or "dis" or "bi," and learning to use this knowledge to decipher meanings of new words, introducing new words and meanings before reading a new book, encouraging the use of new vocabulary in writing to make it more precise and descriptive, and independent reading and read-alouds.

¹ Examples provided in this document were modeled from the Literacy Collaborative, a comprehensive school literacy model. This is not an endorsement of the model. Rather, these examples are provided for descriptive purposes only. For more information on the Literacy Collaborative, visit www.literacycollaborative.org.

5. Reading Comprehension

Refers to the ability to understand what one is reading—to relate a text to what one already knows while also constructing new knowledge and understanding.

Before reading a text, the teacher introduces key ideas in the text. During and after reading the teacher leads a discussion with the children, expanding the children's understanding of the text. Children are asked to think actively about what they have read and to increase their understanding through writing and drawing activities.

Definition of Literacy Enrichment for OST Programs:

The UWCI OST Initiative does not expect, nor desire, before and after school and summer programs to implement school-day instructive techniques. Rather, it is the intent of the OST Initiative to educate programs on the fundamentals of literacy, empower frontline staff to provide high-quality literacy enrichment, and enhance current programming where possible to best support student literacy development. It will be important that all programs maintain their unique character and stay fun!

Reading aloud and self-guided reading are examples of enrichment activities that develop literacy skills. Other examples of activities that develop literacy skills include writing stories; reading, discussing and dramatizing literature; book discussion groups; intensive, one-on-one and small group tutoring; project research; use of technology and multi-media; presentation of research or a project; and both small and large group reading activities. Many other enrichment and academic activities can incorporate elements that build literacy, including physical fitness, music and the arts, STEM, and cooking and nutrition. Field trips and special events can also incorporate elements that build literacy skills, and activities that engage parents are especially important to supporting students' acquisition of skills necessary to eventually *read to learn*.



The literacy coach should help you utilize student-level data and/or teacher guidance to identify and/or develop appropriate and effective activities to implement in your program. This could include the use of assessments (either from the school or conducted by your program). The literacy coach can also recommend how to regularly assess students to measure their growth over a specified time period. With the literacy coach's expertise in literacy and your expertise in youth OST programming, you make a great partnership for developing high-quality literacy skill-building activities.

Also Consider Your Program's "Literacy-Richness"

Literacy-rich environments display words and print everywhere, provide opportunities and tools that engage students in reading and writing activities, and celebrate students' reading and writing efforts. To be the most effective at encouraging students to read and write, your program space should have an easily accessible collection of reading materials with a wide range of high-interest fiction and non-fiction books at developmentally appropriate reading levels. The program space should also support whole group, small group, and individual activities. Resources should be accessible in many different formats.



The literacy coach can recommend strategies to improve the literacy-richness of your program environment. Utilize the expertise of the literacy coach to suggest improvements or enhancements to your library, displays, furniture arrangement, and/or technology resources (including iPads and apps).

Finally, Include Parents and the Community!

Parents and guardians are fundamental partners in supporting the success of the children and youth in your program. Parents and the community can do so much to support the strategies implemented as part of the OST Initiative, including volunteering to read with a child, donating books and other resources, donating incentives for reading, family nights, and tracking reading. Invite guests to lead a writing group or guest lecture on writing.



The literacy coach can develop tools to better engage parents and the community in literacy activities. Tell parents you are a part of this initiative so they feel connected to the new strategies being implemented.

Evaluation Plan for the OST Initiative

While programs will not immediately be required to track individual student reading and writing assessment scores, there are measures that will be tracked to evaluate the OST Initiative's short and long-term impact on student achievement. Initially, the following evaluation plan will be used to measure the Initiative's effectiveness. Long-term, it may be necessary for UWCI and partners to look closer at student data to determine overall impact.

Goal	Measure(s)	Evaluation Method(s)
Greater frequency of activities that develop literacy skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Increase in number of activities that are targeted to literacy development» Increase in number of activities that incorporate literacy skill-building strategies (not necessarily strictly literacy – reading and/or writing – activity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Program self-reporting» Staff survey» Youth survey» Literacy coach observation
Improved quality (quantity, appropriateness, and categorical diversity) of program resources available to support high-quality literacy strategies, including but not limited to technology, books, and curricula	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Increase in number of resources» Improvement in appropriateness of resources – i.e. more books for the age of children served, demographics of children served, interests of children, etc.» Improvement in diversity of resources, including fiction and non-fiction options, multi-media, and topics available	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Program self-reporting» Staff survey» Youth survey» Literacy coach observation» Financial reports
Improved staff capabilities (knowledge and confidence) to provide high-quality literacy strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Staff show improved knowledge of literacy and literacy skill-building» Staff show improved confidence providing literacy enrichment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Program self-reporting» Staff survey» Youth survey» Literacy coach observation

Improved OST program and school collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Increase in number of data sharing agreements or MOUs between OST programs and schools » Administrators and staff feel communication between OST program and school has shown improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Program self-reporting » Staff survey » Literacy coach observation
Improved use of student-level data to identify and evaluate literacy strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Staff cite increased use of student-level data to inform activities provided » OST programs (administrators) increase use of assessments in formative and summative program evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Program self-reporting » Staff survey » Literacy coach observation

Contact:

Michelle Rich
Senior Program Manager
SPPG
2910 Westown Pkwy, Ste. 302
West Des Moines, Iowa 50266
mrch@sppg.com
515-237-0328 (o)
504-220-9860 (c)